

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

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a1 > 1. A computer-readable medium having computer executable components, comprising:

a device driver configured to provide information and perform actions associated with a hardware device; and

a driver library containing software routines to make the information and actions provided by the device driver accessible to a management system, the library being accessible by the device driver to handle messages issued to the device driver from the management system.

2. The computer-readable medium of Claim 1, wherein the device driver is further configured with a unique software routine particular to the device driver and related to the hardware device.

3. The computer-readable medium of Claim 2, wherein the device driver is further configured to execute the unique software routine in response to a call from the driver library.

4. The computer-readable medium of Claim 3, wherein the driver library is further configured to call the unique software routine and cause the unique software routine to execute.

5. The computer-readable medium of Claim 3, wherein the unique software routine is configured to retrieve data and perform actions associated with the hardware device.

6. The computer-readable medium of Claim 3, wherein the unique software routine is configured to set a block of data stored on the hardware device.

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a2 > 7. The computer-readable medium of Claim 3, wherein the unique software routine is configured to execute a method associated with the information associated with the hardware device, the method being operative to pass additional information between the device driver and the management system or perform a certain action.

8. The computer-readable medium of Claim 7, wherein the driver library contains a software routine to format the additional information in a format consistent with the management system.

9. The computer-readable medium of Claim 1, wherein the driver library is a dynamically accessible software library.

10. The computer-readable medium of Claim 9, wherein the driver library is further configured to receive, from the device driver, an identifier for a particular Input/Output Request Packet ("IRP"), and to execute a particular software routine related to handling the IRP.

8637 11. The computer-readable medium of Claim 1, wherein the driver library is further configured to receive, from the device driver, an identifier for a particular IRP, to execute a particular software routine related to handling the IRP, and to return to the management system any information retrieved from the hardware device as a result of handling the IRP.

12. The computer-readable medium of Claim 1, wherein the driver library is a static library associated with the device driver.

8647 13. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for providing management information to a management system, which, when executed, comprise:

receiving an input/output request packet ("IRP") message from the management system, the IRP message including instructions regarding data maintained by an instrumented hardware device;

passing the IRP to a driver library containing software routines for handling the instructions of the IRP message; and

handling the IRP message by the driver library.

14. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein passing the IRP to the driver library comprises determining whether the IRP is intended for a particular device driver.

15. The computer-readable medium of Claim 14, further comprising if the IRP is not intended for the particular device driver, passing the IRP to a next device driver in a driver stack.

16. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein handling the IRP message by the driver library comprises calling back to a device driver associated with the instrumented hardware device to request data from or perform an action by the device driver.

17. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein handling the IRP message by the driver library comprises calling back to a device driver associated with the instrumented hardware device to request that data be set at the instrumented hardware device.

18. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13, wherein handling the IRP message by the driver library comprises calling back to a device driver associated with the instrumented hardware device to cause a unique software routine within the device driver to be executed, the unique software routine being configured to perform a function related to the instrumented hardware device.

8/25/7 19. The computer-readable medium of Claim 18, wherein the driver library is further configured to format data received from the device driver in a format consistent with the management system.

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